

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently amended) A method for ~~facilitating and tracking personal referrals related to an employment offer, the method~~ comprising:

~~generating a unique identifier that is associated exclusively with the pairing of one individual and one offer~~ the employment offer;

~~sending to said individual an electronic-mail message that provides a hyperlink to or contains a Web page whose address or contents includes said unique identifier or a transformation thereof;~~

~~providing in said Web page a means to allow the individual to input~~ provide the electronic-mail (email) address of persons to whom said individual wishes to refer the employment opportunity; and,

tracking the referral by:

receiving from said individual the email addresses for the persons to whom said individual referred,

updating at least one database to associate the individual with the electronic-mail addresses of the persons whom the individual wishes to refer, and

for each electronic-mail address of persons whom said individual wishes to refer, returning to generating a unique identifier.

~~providing in said Web page a means of opting out of receiving all such electronic-mail messages.~~

2. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein said unique identifier or a transformation thereof is included in a uniform resource locator.

3. (Currently amended) The method of claim 1, ~~further comprising~~ where sending includes:

determining whether said individual has previously been sent an electronic-mail message about said offer, and,

sending when said individual has not previously been sent an electronic message about said offer.

4. (Currently amended) The method of claim 1, ~~further comprising~~ where sending includes:

determining whether said individual has previously opted out of receiving all such electronic-mail messages, and,

sending when said individual has not previously opted out of receiving such electronic-mail messages.

5. (Currently amended) The method of claim 1, ~~further comprising~~ where sending includes:

determining whether said individual has previously opted out of receiving electronic-mail messages pertaining to a category of items that contains said offer, and,

sending when said individual has not previously opted out of receiving electronic-mail messages pertaining to said offer.

6. (Currently amended) The method of claim 1, ~~further comprising~~ where sending includes:
determining the party whose referral caused said offer to be made to said individual and whether said individual has previously opted out of receiving electronic-mail messages pertaining to offers referred by said party.
7. (Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising:
providing in said Web page a means of accepting said offer.
8. (Original) The method of claim 7, further comprising:
notifying the sponsor of said offer in case of an acceptance by said individual.
9. (Cancelled)
10. (Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising:
providing in said Web page a means of opting out of receiving electronic-mail messages pertaining to one or more categories of such offers.
11. (Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising:
providing in said Web page a means of opting out of receiving electronic-mail messages pertaining to offers referred by the party whose referral caused said offer to be made to said individual.
12. (Currently amended) The method of claim 1, ~~further comprising~~ where sending includes:
determining whether said offer is still valid, and
~~substituting~~ sending the latest version of said offer if a new version is available.
13. (Cancelled)
14. (Currently amended) An apparatus for facilitating and tracking personal referrals, comprising:
a storage device; and
a processor connected to said storage device,
said storage device storing a program for controlling said processor; and said processor operative with said program to:
generate a unique identifier that is associated exclusively with the pairing of one individual and one offer;
send to said individual an electronic-mail message that provides a hyperlink to or contains a Web page whose address or contents includes said unique identifier or a transformation thereof;
provide in said Web page a means to allow the individual to input the electronic-mail address of persons whom said individual wishes to refer; and,
track the referral by:
receiving from said individual the email addresses for the persons to whom said individual referred.

updating at least one database to associate the individual with the electronic-mail addresses of the persons whom the individual wishes to refer, and for each electronic-mail address of persons whom said individual wishes to refer, return to generate a unique identifier.
~~provide in said Web page a means of opting out of receiving all such electronic-mail messages.~~

15. (Original) The apparatus of claim 14 wherein said processor is further operative to determine whether said individual has previously been sent an electronic-mail message about said offer.

16. (Original) The apparatus of claim 14 wherein said processor is further operative to determine whether said individual has previously opted out of receiving all such electronic-mail messages.

17. (Original) The apparatus of claim 14 wherein said processor is further operative to determine whether said individual has previously opted out of receiving electronic-mail messages pertaining to a category of items that contains said offer.

18. (Original) The apparatus of claim 14 wherein said processor is further operative to determine the party whose referral caused said offer to be made to said individual and whether said individual has previously opted out of receiving electronic-mail messages pertaining to offers referred by said party.

19. (Original) The apparatus of claim 14 wherein said processor is further operative to notify the sponsor of said offer in case of an acceptance by said individual.

20. (Original) The apparatus of claim 14 wherein said processor is further operative to send electronic-mail messages to said persons who were referred by said individual in the case when said offer is still valid.

21-47. (Cancelled)

48. (New) The method of claim 1, further comprising:
providing in said Web page a means of opting out of receiving all such electronic-mail messages.

49. (New) The system of claim 14, wherein the processor is further operative to provide in said Web page a means of opting out of receiving all such electronic-mail messages.